

50 YEARS OF SPACE EXPLORATION

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring the California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, JPL, in Pasadena, CA, for 50 years of space exploration. Since the launch of *Explorer I*, America's first spacecraft, on January 31, 1958, JPL has made momentous and historic contributions to our scientific understanding of our vast universe.

For the past five decades, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory has been a respected leader in furthering scientific knowledge around the world. *Explorer 1* was built in less than 3 months, and was the first spacecraft ever launched into space that actually revolved around Earth and provided scientific findings from space. The immense success of *Explorer I* led to the passage of the Space Act in 1958, which established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Since the inception of NASA, JPL has been on the forefront of science and technology through its research and exploration of every known planet in our solar system. Subsequent to the success of *Explorer I*, JPL has continued to have a central role in accomplished space missions, such as exploring our vast solar system with *Voyager 1* and *2* and the Mars Exploration Rovers. JPL has also been instrumental in understanding our planet.

I congratulate the California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory on 50 years of successful and insightful space exploration, and thank the original members of the *Explorer I* team for their contribution to American history. •

BEST COMMUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

• Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, each year, the America's Promise Alliance names the 100 Best Communities for Young People in the Nation. Today, I am proud to honor five Minnesota towns that have achieved this tremendous designation—Landfall, Mankato, Northfield, Saint Louis Park, and Saint Paul, MN.

The 100 Best Communities for Young People is an annual competition that recognizes outstanding community-wide efforts that improve the well-being of youth and inspire other localities to take action.

There is apparently much to find inspiration from, as two previous award winners have now become five—a strong showing from the great State of Minnesota.

Each of these five Minnesota communities demonstrated a commitment to community support of children through resources including effective education, safe gathering places, and a wide range of programming. Their commitment generates real outcomes in the form of high graduation rates and educational achievement, healthy

behaviors, and civic engagement by their young population.

Landfall, MN, is a small town with big plans for its young people. A town of just 700, they place a premium on expanding the horizons of young people. They provide students with "Extra Innings," a tutoring and mentoring program that gives elementary through high school students one-on-one help with math, reading, and English as a second language.

Mankato, MN, a three-time winner of this honor, prides itself on embracing young people to help them reach their fullest potential. Among their initiatives is the LinkCrew, which pairs high school freshmen with junior and senior year mentors to help them make a successful transition to high school. And, as the town that raised six Bessler boys, including my husband John, I know firsthand of the high-caliber young people Mankato produces.

Northfield, MN, used to be a farm town, centered between corn and wheat fields. Now, anchored by two of our Nation's preeminent colleges, Carleton College and Saint Olaf College, Northfield has become an enriching place for young people. The Mayor's Youth Council allows students ages 15 to 18 to advise the mayor and city council on issues related to the young population.

Saint Louis Park, MN, is also a three-time winner. They welcome youth into their process of government, inviting them to participate in decisionmaking on special neighborhood and community issues. Among other attractions, it is home to 51 parks thanks to the city's initiative to reserve a percentage of all city land for public parks. And in a special nod to its young population, the city's Web site lists the best sledding hills in its community.

Saint Paul, MN, is our State's capital city and a shining example of how to engage children after school hours. Through the Second Shift and After School Initiatives, they provide positive places for children to spend their afternoons, develop new skills, and obtain academic assistance.

From his theatre in downtown Saint Paul, Minnesota's native son, Garrison Keillor, refers to his fictional Minnesota town of Lake Wobegon as a place where "all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average." These five towns have certainly proven Keillor's words are more truth than fiction.

I am proud to represent five of America's Best Communities for Young People and to congratulate them before the U.S. Senate. •

RECOGNIZING SAINT CLOUD, MINNESOTA

• Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a great achievement by the City of Saint Cloud, MN.

St. Cloud, MN, is located on the banks of the Mississippi River, 60 miles northwest of the Twin Cities. When it was founded more than 150 years ago, it was known as the Granite City. But now it also bears the title of the Most Livable Community in the World.

The LivCom Awards are the world's only competition for local communities that focuses on environmental management and the creation of livable communities. This year, they have named Saint Cloud the "Most Livable Community in the World."

This award is a deserved honor and recognition of the outstanding efforts being undertaken by the City of Saint Cloud to create a livable and sustainable community.

The awards encourage best practice, innovation, and leadership in providing vibrant, environmentally sustainable communities that improve the quality of life for their residents and people worldwide.

Among the goals of the award is to model innovative community planning and living for other communities. I hope that Saint Cloud will inspire other communities to tackle challenging environmental and energy issues facing our nation.

Saint Cloud topped entrants from more than 50 countries. The residents of Saint Cloud, the Most Livable City in the World, have much to be proud of.

I ask that you join me in congratulating the world's most livable community, Saint Cloud, MN. •

IN HONOR OF 2ND LIEUTENANT SETH C. PIERCE

• Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, today I wish to honor 2LT Seth Pierce of Lincoln, NE.

Lieutenant Pierce was a proud member of the U.S. Marine Corps, whose friends remember him as a dedicated and passionate person who "wore his heart on his sleeve." While attending Lincoln Southeast High School, he ran the first leg on his relay team and won the State championship in 2001. His coach described his team as "the most overachieving boys I've ever coached. They won because they were connected to each other."

A 2002 graduate of Lincoln Southeast High School and a 2006 graduate of Arizona State University, Lieutenant Pierce was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps in December 2006. Lieutenant Pierce passed away due to a car accident on October 21, 2007, in Quantico, VA, where he was stationed.

Lieutenant Pierce is survived by his parents, Larry and Linda Pierce of Surprise, AZ; his brother and sister-in-law, Aaron and Crystal Pierce, of Omaha; and his grandparents, Edwin and Ruth Steffens and Luther and Esther Pierce, all of Lincoln. I offer my most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Lieutenant Pierce. His noble service to the United States of America is to be respected and appreciated. The loss